

# SAFETY MESSAGE

Your Personal Safety is our #1 priority



## Treating a Sprained Ankle, Compiled by USDA-APHIS-CCEP

A sprained ankle means one or more ligaments on the outside of your ankle were stretched or torn.

Ankle sprains are very common injuries and can lead to long term problems if not treated properly. You're most likely to sprain your ankle when you have your toes on the ground and heel up (plantar flexion). This position puts your ankle's ligaments under tension, making them vulnerable. A sudden force like landing on an uneven surface may turn your ankle inward (inversion). When this happens, one, two or three of your ligaments may be hurt.

## Symptoms

- Swelling
- Pain
- Bruising

## How it can happen:

- Stepping on an uneven surface
- Losing your balance
- Landing on the side of the foot

## Treatment

Follow the R.I.C.E procedure

- Rest your ankle by not walking on it.
- Ice several times a day for 15-20 minutes to keep the swelling down, **never** for more than 20 minutes.
- Compressive bandages to immobilize and support your injury.
- Elevate your ankle above your heart level for 48 hours.

## Rehabilitation

- **Phase I** -resting, protecting and reducing swelling of your injured ankle.
- **Phase II**- restoring your ankle's flexibility, range of motion, and strength.
- **Phase III**- gradually return to straight-ahead activity and doing maintenance exercises, followed later by more cutting sports such as tennis, basketball or football.

To prevent future sprained ankles, pay attention to your body's warning signs to slow down when you feel pain or fatigue, and stay in shape with good muscle balance, flexibility, and strength in your soft tissues.